



Water service leaks on private property

Find out what causes a water service leak, and who is responsible for service repairs. Learn what to do and who to call should you suspect there may be a leak on your property.

What is a water service?

A water service is the pipe delivering water to each residence in the city. The water service can be thought of in two sections: the first section, running from the water main to the property line, is owned and maintained by The City; the second section, running from the property line to the house is owned and maintained by the homeowner.



If the leak is determined to be on the private portion of the water service, the property owner is responsible for all associated repair costs.

What causes a service leak?

Water service leaks can result from corrosion due to pipe age and material type, soil type, ground movement and/or the expansion/contraction of the pipe resulting from temperature variations.

A drop in water pressure may indicate a leak in the water service outside the building (between the city water main and the water meter).



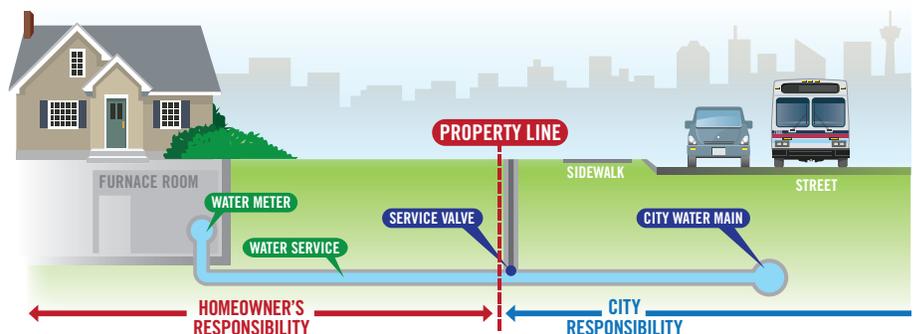
What are the responsibilities of a homeowner and The City with regards to a water service?

All water pipes and devices outside the property line are the responsibility of The City of Calgary. That includes things like water mains, water main valves and service valves. We are responsible for all repairs to these lines.

The homeowner is responsible for the water pipe that leads from their house to the service valve (which is usually located at or near the property line). The homeowner is responsible for the main shut-off valve that is normally located inside their house.

Property lines:

- In most cases, the property line is a few metres from the edge of the curb or sidewalk. The legal survey completed when the building was purchased shows where the property lines lie.
- The diagram below shows that the service valve is placed very close to the property line. It is not always on The City side, however The City owns it.
- The property owner is responsible for all repair costs to the service on private property (with the exception of the water meter).

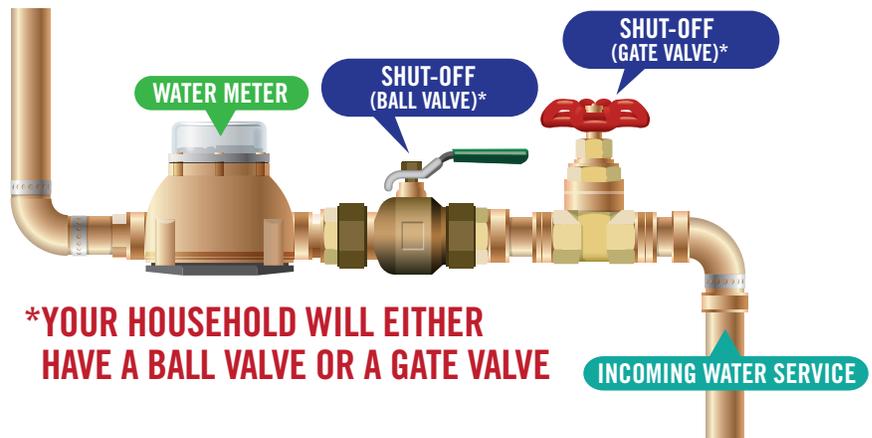


What do I do if I suspect there is a leak on my property?

The following signs may indicate that there is a leak on the water service outside the building (between the water meter and The City service valve):

- Noise on the water service while none of the taps are running.
- Drop in water pressure.
- Water flowing or pooling on the ground surface.

If you suspect a leak outside your home, **contact 311**.



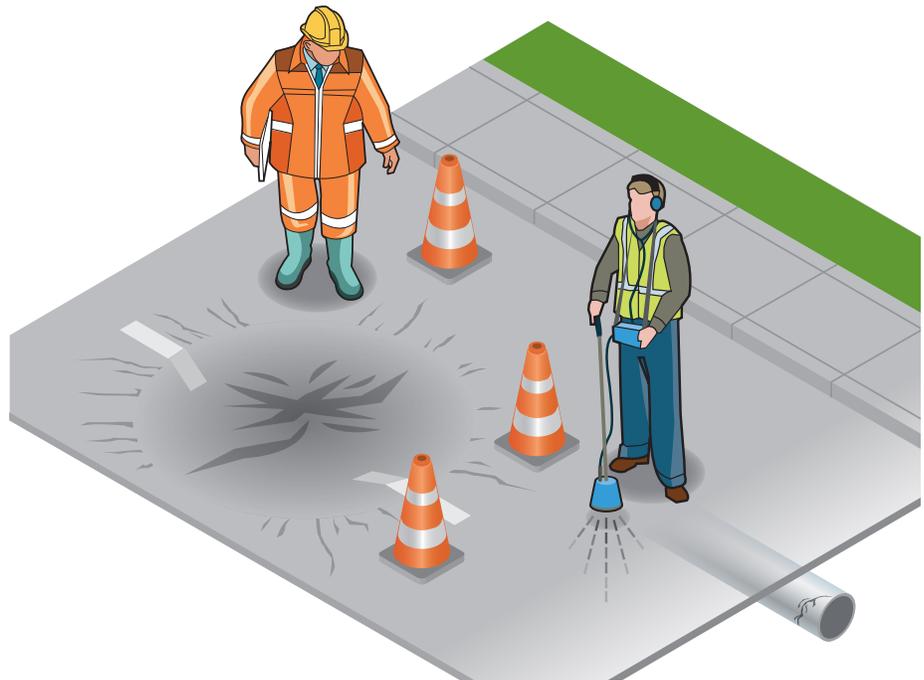
***YOUR HOUSEHOLD WILL EITHER HAVE A BALL VALVE OR A GATE VALVE**

How does The City check for leaks?

There are two ways in which The City checks for leaks:

1. Through 311 from citizens suspecting leaks and water main breaks. Leak locators are then dispatched.
2. **City Planned Survey:** When the leak locators are not attending emergency main breaks, they perform scheduled routine leak detection surveys in assigned communities to proactively locate potential water leaks.

If a leak is suspected to be on the private property side of the water service, a leak locator employee will contact the homeowner to obtain access to the water meter or main shut-off valve inside the house or building to perform further tests. A leak on private property can be determined by turning off the water at the shut-off valve. If the leak stops, repairing the leak is the homeowner's responsibility.





What happens if a leak is discovered in my water service?

If there is a leak in your water service, you are responsible for:

- Arranging for a water contractor to make any necessary repairs.
- Paying for the repairs.

Per the Water Utility Bylaw (Reference #40M2006), the owner is responsible to 'maintain such Water Service Connections in a state of good repair, with sufficient protection from freezing, free form leakage, or other water loss.' The City requires repairs to be made within 15 days or a remedial order may be issued.

How is a water service leak repaired?

There are a few methods used to repair a water service.

- **Service pull** - Trenchless procedure that pulls a replacement water service from the house to the service valve with minimal digging.
- **Excavating** - Trench excavation from The City's service valve to the house.
- **Spot repair** - Utilizing the hydrovac procedure (pressurized water and vacuum system to expose underground pipes) allows for repairs to a water service at the leak location.

How much do water service repairs cost?

The cost of a repair can be highly variable, depending on the contractor and type of water service repair. Unfortunately these repairs aren't typically covered by a basic homeowner's insurance policy. In order to reduce the financial impact of unplanned repairs, you may wish to explore additional insurance options. Talk to your current home insurance provider.

What can happen if a leak isn't addressed?

Your water service is connected to the water mains that carry water from the water treatment plant to your home. Because the water system is pressurized, when a hole or crack occurs in the water service, water will continue to flow until The City turns off your water service valve(s). Failure to address a leak may cause damage to your property, the street and sidewalks. Repairs must be made as soon as possible. Water usually finds its way to the surface, but depending on the soil type (e.g. gravel, sandy soil), water may not surface immediately.

Water may:

- Saturate the soil and seep into your basement or your neighbour's basement.
- Cause sump pumps to operate unnecessarily.
- Cause damage to the foundation of your home or business.



Who should I call to get my water service leak fixed?

The City cannot recommend which contractor to hire, nor does The City endorse the quality of work or warranty any work done on private property by any contractor.

When hiring a contractor, The City suggests that you:

- Get at least three estimates.
- Ask for and check contractor references.
- Contact the Better Business Bureau, or a similar agency, for a reliability report on the contractors.

Your contractor will be responsible for:

- Obtaining the necessary permits.
- Getting clearances from utility companies (e.g. Alberta One-Call).
- Repairing the leak.

The City of Calgary Water Services is responsible for:

- Turning off the water so that the repair can be made.

Fees are applicable to turn the water service off and on.

We may have to turn off the water at any time after the leak is discovered, if the leak becomes a risk to:

- Our water supply.
- Public safety.
- Private or public property.

While your water is off during the repair, we recommend that you:

- Keep your taps closed to prevent flooding when your water is turned back on.
- Turn off hot water tanks to prevent damage.

Options for temporary water:

If weather permits (temperatures above zero degrees), you may have the option to install a temporary water line from your neighbour's water plumbing, if they agree to this. Information will be provided to you if this option is available.

Once the repair is complete, we recommend that you do the following:

- Call 311 to book a service call to have your main water service turned on near the property line.
- Have a person 18-years or older be present at the home or building in order to have your water service turned on.
- Wash tap aerators and screens in hot soapy water, then disinfect them for 10 minutes in a solution of one part bleach to nine parts water.
- Disinfect any water filters to the manufacturer's recommendations.

If you have any questions, **contact 311.**